

## **Categorical Exclusion Documentation Format for Actions Other Than Hazardous Fuels and Fire Rehabilitation Actions**

APS 230 kV line from Sun Valley substation (TS-5) to Trilby Substation (TS-1)  
DOI-BLM-AZ-P010-2010-23CX

### **A. Background**

BLM Office: *Hassayampa Field Office (HFO)*

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: **AZA-033510**

Proposed Action Title/Type: APS 230 kV Transmission line from Sun Valley substation (TS-5) to Trilby Substation (TS-1)

Location of Proposed Action: A 100' strip of land situated within BLM Tract No. 39 in Sections 20, 21 and 22 of T. 4 N., R. 4 W., of Gila and Salt River Base and Meridian, Maricopa County, Arizona, and the west 40' of Tract 37 lying within the NW 1/4 of Section 16, T. 4 N., R. 3 W. of the Gila and Salt River Meridian, Maricopa County, Arizona.

Description of Proposed Action: The proposed project is a 230 kV transmission line that would originate at a future 500 kV/230kV/69kV Transmission Substation Site (TS-5) located on the south side of the Central Arizona Project (CAP) near the Hassayampa Pump Station and would terminate at the future 230 kV/69kV Transmission Trilby Substation Site (TS-1), located west of the Northwest Regional Landfill and north of the existing 500 kV transmission line corridor.

The estimated length of the proposed transmission line is between 14 and 16 miles. A right-of-way of up to 150' in width and a lease-term of 30 years would be required to construct, operate, and maintain the transmission line, transmission line structures and substation facilities. The 230 kV transmission line would be in operation year round transporting bulk power to the Western Phoenix metropolitan area. The proposed project would take approximately one year to construct, with an in-service date of June 2014. The Sun Valley substation would require up to 10 acres and the Trilby substation would require up to 120 acres for construction, maintenance and landscape mitigation.

### **B. Land Use Plan Conformance**

Land Use Plan (LUP) Name: Bradshaw-Harquahala Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan and Final EIS, Page 32, LR-15 "Land Tenure Adjustment". "All major utilities would be routed through designated corridors. Encourage new rights-of-way within designated corridors to promote the maximum use of existing routes. Encourage joint use whenever possible.

Date Approved/Amended: **4/22/2010**

☒ The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s): See above.

☐ The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions):

**C: Compliance with NEPA:**

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 Departmental Manual (DM) 2, Appendix 1, or 516 DM 11.5: H-1790-1, Appendix 4, BLM Categorical Exclusions E. Realty, 12 “Grants of right-of-way wholly within the boundaries of other compatibly developed rights-of-way.” This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 or 516 DM 11.5 apply.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 11.9 apply.

I have considered: Environmental analyses for land use, visual resources, biological resources, and cultural resources were completed for the APS West Valley-North Power Line Project and are documented in Chapter 4 of Exhibit B-1 Siting Study Report of the Application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility for the APS West Valley-North Power Line and Substation. The TS-5 to TS-1 project area is discussed in the West Valley-North siting studies as Alternative C under the heading "500kV Corridor West."

Documents produced for this project and other projects in the area which were reviewed for preparing this document include: Biological Resources Present on the Bureau of Land Management Portions of the TS-5 to TS-1 Segment of the Arizona Public Service West Valley-North Transmission Line Project Corridor (EPG, 2007), A Cultural Resource Survey of the TS-5 to TS-1 Segment of the Arizona Public Service West Valley-North Transmission Line, Maricopa County, Arizona (EPG 2007), Application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility for the APS West Valley-North Power Line and Substation Project (URS 2004), Palo Verde Hub to TS-5 Substation Transmission Line Project Environmental Assessment (EPG 2005), and Application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility for the Palo Verde Hub to TS-5 Substation Transmission Line Project (EPG 2005).

The Project will comply with the conditions stated in the Certificate of Environmental Compatibility granted to the West Valley North 230kV Transmission Line Project on May 5, 2005.

**D: Signature**

**Review:** *We have determined that the proposal is in accordance with the categorical exclusion criteria and that it would not involve any significant environmental effects (see Attachment 1). Therefore, it is categorically excluded from further environmental review.*

**Prepared by:** \_\_\_\_\_/S/\_\_\_\_\_

**Kathleen Depukat  
Project Lead**

**Reviewed by:** \_\_\_\_\_/S/\_\_\_\_\_

**Leah Baker**  
**Planning & Environmental Coordinator**

**Approved by:** \_\_\_\_\_/S/\_\_\_\_\_

**D. Remington Hawes**  
**Hassayampa Field Manager**

**Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact:  
Kathleen Depukat, Project Manager, 623-580-5681

**Note:** A separate decision document must be prepared for the action covered by the CX.

BLM Categorical Exclusions: Extraordinary Circumstances<sup>1</sup>

**Attachment 1**

The action has been reviewed to determine if any of the extraordinary circumstances (43 CFR 46.215) apply. The project would:		
1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Rationale:</b> The proposed action would not significantly impact public health and safety. Any potential public health and safety impacts should be addressed in the right-of-way stipulations
2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness or wilderness study areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds (Executive Order 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas?		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Rationale:</b> There are no historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness or wilderness study areas; wild or scenic rivers, national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands; national monuments; or other ecologically significant or critical areas within the project area. The project would not significantly impact migratory birds or floodplains.</p> <p>A detailed review of cultural records and an intensive pedestrian cultural survey were conducted in support of the TS-5-TS-1 segment of the proposed project in February 2007 by EPG archaeologists. A single previously recorded site was identified as potentially occurring within or near the project APE. The area where the site was previously recorded was examined for any evidence of the site but the site could not be located. Records indicate that the site was excavated in 1982 and subsequent construction of the Granite Reef Aqueduct likely destroyed any remaining traces of the site. The intensive pedestrian survey identified no previously recorded or newly recorded cultural resources. The construction of the transmission line would have no impact to cultural resources within the area.</p> <p>Because of the additional impounded water available on the upslope (north) side of the Central Arizona Project (CAP), areas of increased plant species diversity and density, known as “green-up areas”, have developed. Due to denser vegetation and seasonally available water</p>

<sup>1</sup> If an action has any of these impacts, you must conduct NEPA analysis.

		that is present in the green-up areas they are more attractive to wildlife. These areas are not very large, seldom extending up drainage from the CAP for more than a couple of hundred feet. The confinement of this habitat to relatively small areas generally makes construction avoidance of these areas feasible. For transmission line construction this is accomplished by spanning these areas, with tower sites set back a substantial distance from their edge. Due to the presence of existing access roads across the green-up areas, new access roads would not be needed. Therefore, impacts to the green-up areas would be limited to pole locations; the ground disturbance associated with transmission line poles is relatively minimal. There would be no significant impacts to any ecologically significant or critical areas.
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)]?		
<b>Yes</b>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Rationale:</b> The proposed route went through extensive analysis during the CEC siting process and received a CEC from the Arizona Corporation Commission in May 2005. No highly controversial environmental effects or unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources were identified.
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?		
<b>Yes</b>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Rationale:</b> The proposed route went through extensive analysis during the CEC siting process and received a CEC from the Arizona Corporation Commission in May 2005. No highly controversial environmental effects or unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources were identified.
5. Establish a precedent for future action, or represent a decision in principle about future actions, with potentially significant environmental effects?		
<b>Yes</b>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Rationale:</b> The project went through extensive analysis during the siting process and a CEC was received from the Arizona Corporation Commission in May 2005. No potentially significant environmental effects were identified. The project would not establish a precedent for future action, nor represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, environmental effects?		
<b>Yes</b>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Rationale:</b> The project would connect to two substations and be part of a network of transmission lines in the northwest valley. Cumulative effects analyses were completed for the West Valley North Environmental Report and for the Palo Verde to TS-5 Environmental Assessment. The analyses determined there would be no significant cumulative effects.
7. Have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the Bureau or office?		
<b>Yes</b>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Rationale:</b> Since there is no property listed or eligible for listing on

<input type="checkbox"/>	x <input type="checkbox"/>	the National Register of Historic Places, there would be no impacts.
8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species?		
<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Rationale:</b> There are no designated or proposed Threatened or Endangered Species occurring near the project area. No designated or proposed critical habitat is present in the area.
9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?		
<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Rationale:</b> The proposed action complies with federal, state and local laws and requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898)?		
<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Rationale:</b> The project would not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations. The affected BLM parcels are uninhabited, as are the adjacent parcels.
11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners, or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007)?		
<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Rationale:</b> The project would not limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal land by Indian religious practitioners. The project would not adversely affect the physical integrity of sacred sites because no such sites are known to exist on the affected LM parcels. A Cultural Resource study was completed for the project and recommended that the project would not cause significant impacts to cultural resources; the State Historic Preservation Office concurred with the report.
12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area, or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112)?		
<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b> x <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Rationale:</b> The proposed project will comply with BLM stipulations pertaining to noxious weed/non-native invasive species mitigation.

**Decision**  
**Attachment 2**

**Project Description:**

The proposed project is a 230 kV transmission line that would originate at a future 500 kV/230kV/69kV Transmission Substation Site (TS-5) located on the south side of the Central Arizona Project (CAP) near the Hassayampa Pump Station and would terminate at the future 230 kV/69kV Transmission Trilby Substation Site (TS-1), located west of the Northwest Regional Landfill and north of the existing 500 kV transmission line corridor. The estimated length of the proposed transmission line is between 14 and 16 miles. A right-of-way of up to 150' in width and a lease-term of 30 years would be required to construct, operate, and maintain the transmission line, transmission line structures and substation facilities. The 230 kV transmission line would be in operation year round transporting bulk power to the Western Phoenix metropolitan area. The proposed project would take approximately one year to construct, with an in-service date of June 2014. The Sun Valley substation would require up to 10 acres and the Trilby substation would require up to 120 acres for construction, maintenance and landscape mitigation.

**Decision:** Based on a review of the project described above and field office staff recommendations, I have determined that the project is in conformance with the land use plan and is categorically excluded from further environmental analysis. It is my decision to approve the action as proposed, with the following stipulations (if applicable).

**Approved By:** \_\_\_\_\_/S/\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_08/22/2012\_  
**D. Remington Hawes**  
**Field Manager**